

THE LEISURE HOUR.

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"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cooper.*



AT "THE SQUIRREL."

HURLOCK CHASE.

BY G. E. SARGENT, AUTHOR OF "STORY OF A CITY ARAB."
CHAPTER XXXII.—IN THE CHASE.

A YEAR has passed away since the date of our story's commencement, and we once more introduce the reader to some of our earlier *dramatis personæ*. It is a dark evening in September, and Hurlock Chase is shrouded in the general gloom, which is increased and intensified by a cold, thick, sluggish mist which has risen since sunset from its adjacent waters, and through which the furnace fires dimly penetrate across the furnace pond in a dull, dark, crimson, lurid glare.

The Chase is not entirely deserted, however. Through the mist and gloom two or three groups of foot-passengers are making their way from various quarters to one point of rendezvous. They evidently know every foot of the ground they are traversing, and have no need of the young moon, which, following closely in the wake of the sun, sunk below the horizon an hour ago; for they press on steadily and rapidly through tall brake and tangled grass, occasionally starting up a solitary hare from its form, or a young fawn from its lair.

Whatever may be the object of their excursion, there

is no great affectation of secrecy or stealth in the movements of these night-travellers. They step out firmly on the sward and sod, and their general bearing is like that of men who, either being about their lawful business, have no occasion to fear observation, or whose purposes being questionable, are confident in their superior power.

Their leaders—for each party is under the direction of a leader—are vigilant, however, and occasionally a halt is called, and ears are bent close to the ground, to catch more readily the sound of distant footsteps, before the march is resumed. Occasionally, too, a shrill cry, resembling nothing so much as the “te-who” of a shriek-owl, rises high above their heads, and elicits a distant response.

“All right, boys,” the leader of one party then remarks, in a low breath, and begins humming a tune. Apparently the example is infectious; for in another moment the refrain is taken up by one of his followers, who lustily sings out—

“Hullo, my fancy! whither wilt thou go?”

which calls down upon his head the growling rebuke of his superior.

“Whist! be whist, can’t you, Bob Phillips? Do you want to let everybody know what’s going on?”

“Who cares whether they know or not, Will Carter?” asks the songster, defiantly.

“I care, for one,” says Carter. “There’s no use in bringing down half a dozen riding officers on us; so be quiet.”

An angry retort was on Bob Phillips’s tongue, when the attention of the party was arrested by a clear voice from the surrounding gloom, but evidently near at hand, singing not unmusically.

“You’ve started ‘em off, anyhow, Bob,” said another, with a low chuckling laugh.

“Be quiet, Frank Jones,” whispered the leader, “and halt all. Let’s know who this bold fellow is: not one of our set, I should think. Look out: he is coming this way,” he added, as the voice sounded nearer.

“What’s the use of saying, ‘Look out,’ when one can’t see a dozen yards, all along of this fog?” demanded Frank.

The voice approached nearer still. The man to whom it belonged was apparently crossing the Chase from the opposite direction to that which the party was taking, and was passing by near enough to let them quickly perceive who it was.

“A nice time of night for you to be wandering about, Master Heywood,” said Carter, but not in unfriendly tones.

“All times are alike to me when I am in my Master’s work,” replied the evangelist, quietly. “He worked night and day, day and night, William Carter.”

“So you know me, do you, to come out with my name so pat?”

“Surely. I have not heard your voice so seldom but I know you well enough, friend.”

“And you know who we all are here?”

“There are not many men on the country-side that will bear comparing with you forgermen,” said Heywood.

“Ah, I see you know us. And you do know us. But you have not told me where you come from.”

“From Westrop Brooks.”

“So I guessed. Been holding a preachment there?”

“I have been engaged in my Master’s service there, I hope, William Carter; and I wish you were engaged in the same service, friend. You’ll come to wish you had been, some day.”

“Come, stow that!” growled Bob Phillips, savagely.

“Be quiet, Bob, can’t you?” interposed the leader; and then he turned again to his captive. “I’ve got one service already; and one’s enough for any man. ‘No man can serve two masters,’ you know.”

“He’s a bad master, I donbt, friend, that spiritual master of yours. ‘The wages of sin is death,’” said the evangelist, boldly.

“Pho! I mean Jason Brooke. You know that we are in his service; and suppose as how we have had orders to take up all trespassers?”

“There’s a right of road everywhere all over the Chase, friend,” replied Heywood.

“Ah, but there’s no right of voice to go screeching over it, frightening honest folks out of their wits. If you had kept your tongue between your teeth, my friend, you might have gone on quietly. And, for the matter of that, so you may now if you’ll answer a question or two like an honest fellow, as I rather think you are at bottom.”

“I thank you for your good opinion, William Carter, and I will answer you as far as I am permitted; and if I cannot answer you truly, I will truly say so.”

“That will do, then. And, firstly, as you say in your sermons, do you know where we are bound?”

“I might say no with a safe conscience; but, inasmuch as I can guess, I will say at once that I suppose you are going over to ‘The Squirrel.’”

“Right, right as a trivet, Master Heywood. Right, my friend. And I suppose there’s no harm in a set of thirsty forgermen agoing to squench their drieth at a decent public-house?”

“Better to quench it with fair water, friend, or nearer home, at any rate,” said Heywood.

“Every one to his taste. But suppose we are going to ‘The Squirrel’ on a matter of business. You passed by ‘The Squirrel,’ if you did not go in: is it all quiet?”

“I neither saw nor heard anything to the contrary,” replied the preacher.

“Did you notice any light in the right-hand gable window—in the room where old Parsley lies bedrid?”

“There were two lights in it,” said the other, steadily.

“All right, then, so far. Nonsense, Phillips; you needn’t be poking your elbow in my side. The Methodist parson knows what them lights mean as well as you do. Eh, Master Heywood?”

“I do know what they mean; at least, I can guess,” returned the preacher, as steadily as before.

“And who cares who knows it?” demanded Bob Phillips, impatiently. “Why don’t you cut it short, Will?”

“I tell you there’s time enough; and I sha’n’t cut it shorter than I choose. There’s nothing like being safe; and I want the latest news I can get. So, Master Heywood, for another question. Are there any hawks about, do you know?”

“If you mean riding officers and such-like——”

“I do mean them, in coorse,” interposed the questioner.

“I have heard to-day—not that I wished to be told—but I have heard that almost all the force was drawn off this afternoon to Billingsa.”

Will Carter rubbed his hands with glee. “All right, boys,” he cried. “I heard it was to be so ordered, but I wasn’t sure. We shall be all right this time again.”

“There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death,” said the preacher, solemnly; but he was interrupted by the leader of the party:—

"That will do, my friend. A very good text, no doubt: we'll have the sermon another time. And now march, boys, march. You'll not go with us, I suppose, Master Heywood?"

"I would go with you, William Carter, much farther than to 'The Squirrel,' if I could do you any good," said the preacher, sadly.

"The best good you can do now is to be off home, Master Heywood, and keep your mouth close. You understand." And with this parting caution the preacher was released, and his late captors went on their way.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—AT "THE SQUIRREL."

ON the borders of the Chase, and within two miles of the great house of "The Hurlocks," also equidistant from the Priory, was the ancient hostel of "The Squirrel." It was a rambling old building, with the date 1506 carved in a block of heart-of-oak which surmounted its roomy porch. Originally it was a farm-house belonging to the Priory; but on the dissolution of that monastic establishment the farm was severed from the larger estate, and became the property of a well-to-do yeoman of the eighth Harry's reign. In his family it continued nearly two hundred years, and might have remained longer if the last of the line in possession had not paid more attention to drinking, card-playing, horse-racing, and cock-fighting than to honest husbandry. Then the end came—the end of prosperity and the beginning of ruin. The young farmer, in short, went to the bad, as we say nowadays, and the farm-house was severed from the farm, which became part and parcel of the Hurlock estate. Then the old house sunk into comparative neglect and poverty, being let out into separate dwellings for labourers on the estate, until either an enterprising or desperate man—George Parsley by name—bought the premises "for a song," turned out the poor tenants, obtained a license, converted the building into a house of entertainment for man and beast, and put over the great porch a gaudily painted sign-board, representing a squirrel, a good many times larger than life, seated on its haunches and holding an enormous nut between its fore-paws.

It might very well have been a source of wonder as to whence the landlord of "The Squirrel" could hope to obtain customers for the good ale he announced himself prepared to serve; much more as to where the beasts were to come from which he was desirous of entertaining. To be sure, the house stood handy to a public road which bounded the Hurlock estate at that point; but not many travellers were known to pass that way, and the scanty, scattered population around could scarcely have brought grist enough to the publican's mill to keep it going. Parsley, however, was not disconcerted. He hired a few acres of land, which, with the help of his son and one serving-man, he fairly cultivated; and, as he was a sober fellow himself, he managed, at any rate, to make both ends meet, and kept his own counsel. Meanwhile he kept his house in decent repair, shutting up such of its rooms as were not wanted, or occasionally using them as granaries for his threshed corn, and taking care that the stables—which in the former days of farming prosperity were roomy enough for a small troop of cavalry, and which seemed a world too wide for the pair of horses that sufficed for his work—were kept in readiness for the "beasts" which seemed never to come, excepting, indeed, once a year, when an inundation of Welshmen on hardy mountain ponies, accompanying droves of equally hardy *runts*, penetrated to the southward cattle fairs, and spread themselves all the country round.

In process of time George Parsley grew old, so also

did his wife; and then, after a few more years, the wife died, and old George, having almost lost the use of his limbs, was confined first to his own bed-chamber, and then almost entirely to his bed; so that his son, George Parsley the second (Young George, as he was called), reigned in his stead over the few acres of farm and the rambling old public-house. He also was a sober man (which men accounted a second wonder), and in other respects trod pretty closely in his father's steps, one particular only excepted: he eschewed matrimony. At the date of our story "Young George" was bordering on fifty years of age, and was supposed to have money in the bank of which Roger Gilbert was the sleeping partner.

The source of George Parsley's prosperity, as well as that of his father's before him, was pretty generally attributed to the shares which he secretly held in the very "free trade" of all that country-side and its sea-coast. Add to this, "The Squirrel" was admirably adapted for a place of meeting for smugglers and their patrons, by the very circumstances which made it appear a hopeless speculation to the uninitiated. There were few of these, however; and so well was it known that its landlord had a hand in every successful run of the smuggling cutters which landed their cargoes in Which-which Bay, that a pretty constant watch was set upon his proceedings. Again and again "The Squirrel" was searched from cellar to attic for contraband dry goods and illicit spirits. Stables and outhouses were subject to constant inspection. But nothing was ever found to criminate "The Squirrel's" owner, who stood with his arms folded, and with a queer mocking smile on his countenance, during these movements, and ironically wished the excisemen and their satellites "better luck next time," when they rode off disgusted and disappointed. Again and again private information had been conveyed to these minions of the law, and apparently on trustworthy authority, of midnight gatherings at "The Squirrel," when the whole confraternity of lawless men engaged in defying the king's customs might be caught as in a trap; and, taking their measures with laudable secrecy, they had surrounded the house, and made forcible entrance also, at the precise time indicated, only to rouse the ordinary inmates from their slumbers, and to draw down upon themselves the fierce oburgations of the sleepy landlord for the nocturnal disturbance of his honest quiet and the taking away of his good name. As likely as not, however, the next night, or the night after, when the baffled gentlemen were either safe in their beds, or called away by other and equally authentic information to a distant part of the coast, "The Squirrel" would present, through the hours of darkness, a scene of activity and business which it never exhibited in the day-time.

The state of things thus briefly described may seem strange to our younger readers, who, happily, live in times when more rational laws of international commerce have deprived the smuggling trade of those enormous profits which rendered it worth following, and also of that popularity which generally attaches to the evasion of, or resistance to, unjust, oppressive, and unnatural restrictive laws. But older readers can remember when such times were, and when almost every parish, within a dozen miles of almost any part of the coast of our sea-girt island, had a "Squirrel" within its boundaries. Indeed, the very multiplicity of these notorious resorts made it extremely difficult for the most vigilant excise-officer to deal successfully with the evil; and this difficulty was increased by the means employed by the law-breakers in obtaining good intelligence of their enemies' move-

ments, as well as in misleading those enemies by false information respecting their own designs.

Of course this was a very undesirable state of things. Resistance, whether active or passive, to even a foolish, short-sighted, and unjust set of laws, is attended or followed by almost innumerable evils; and smuggling, in all its phases, in the period of which we treat, was demoralizing and debasing, and in every way inimical to the interests both of the nation and of true and pure religion. The smugglers themselves, whether on sea or on land, were, with few exceptions, brutalized and desperate men, who, knowing that the law would have little mercy on them if they were once caught in its toils, and many of them following their dangerous calling "with a rope round their necks"—to use their own expression—were not disposed to show much mercy to their foes. As to their abettors, who, without running the same risk, enriched themselves and their families by the enormous but unlawful profits of the secret trade, they were, for the most part, more despicable than their tools, inasmuch as the constant concealment which they necessarily practised in their intercourse with the world stamped their whole character with hypocrisy.

Much filling in might be added to the above slight outline of this particular subject; but we have sufficiently digressed, and now return to our story.

The time was eleven o'clock, and the large kitchen of "The Squirrel" was lively with guests, to the number of some five-and-twenty or thirty. Among these, prominently, were some six or seven of the Hurlock forge and furnace men, whose last appearance in these pages was at the funeral of Mary Austin. Tom Carey was not one of them, however; but his absence was made up for by Moses Lee, the gipsy, who, with a few others of his confraternity, mingled with the several groups, who, seated around two or three tables, were variously employed in eating, drinking, smoking, and talking.

They were talking with "bated breath;" and, as the room was well secured and closed in by stout shutters, neither sight nor sound escaped beyond its walls. A cursory passer-by would have deemed "The Squirrel" to have been fast asleep. Nor would this supposition have been contradicted by a peep into the stables at the rear of the hostel, where a dozen or more strong cart-horses were fastened in a row by stout halters to the long manger, apparently groomed and housed up for the night, and lazily munching in the dark the mixture of dry bran and oats which it contained.

It is not to be supposed, however, that no precautions were taken against surprise. All round the homestead, and at various distances in every direction, sentries and scouts were placed; and it would have been hard, in the case of such a contingency, if well-understood signals had not been given in time to enable the company in the kitchen, with the horses in the stables, to disperse before the arrival of the officers and their search-warrant.

The company in the large kitchen were not the only guests "The Squirrel" entertained that night. Opening an inner door, we should have found ourselves in a smaller apartment, usually styled the bar-parlour, and in the presence of a more select party, among whom were the landlord and Will Carter, who had succeeded in bringing in his followers, and was now sitting in conclave with about half a dozen others, and between whom something like the following conversation took place. We omit the unnecessary expletives with which it was plentifully garnished

"You are sure you are right about the time, George?" said one of the men.

"Sure as I can be, Luke," replied Parsley. "The captain gave word that he should be in with the tide, which doesn't turn till half-past one, and that we had better not show till then."

"That gives us another hour to wait here, then. Plaguey slow work. I wish we were at it. But there's no help for it, I suppose. What's to be the signal?"

"The old one. Two lights at the bow, and one at the stern. Then one from the cliffs."

"Then the boats will land the cargo. You are sure that the coast is clear?"

"I can answer for that," said a third speaker, a spruce little silk-mercator from the town in which Roger Gilbert's firm flourished. "Every man Jack of the coast-guard is off to Billingssea, having received the best of intelligence that a valuable cargo is sure to be run there to-night, or to-morrow morning, rather, at three o'clock precise. Ha, ha!"

The laugh was infectious; but it presently ceased, and the conversation was resumed.

"Fairbourne intelligence, wasn't it?"

"That doesn't signify, does it? What's the odds?" asked the landlord of "The Squirrel."

"Not much, so that the bait's taken."

"Oh, the bait's taken fast enough," said a fourth speaker, from the head of the table, who was none other than our old acquaintance William Crickett, but so disguised that his mistresses would have experienced some difficulty in recognising him even in broad daylight.

"If Master Crickett knows it, that's enow," said a fifth speaker. "Howsomdever, 'tis as well to know what's to be done, in case of any little mistake."

"There baint going to be any mistake when we once get a start," rejoined the man named Luke; "but if there should be, I reckon we all knows what to do and how to take care of ourselves, without telling. We all divide, and every man for his gran'ther if they be too many for us; and if they baint——"

"If they baint, we shall be too many for them; I suppose that's what you are going to say, Luke?" said Will Carter, impatiently. "But stow that: I've had enough of long speeches for one night already. How about the hide? Is that planned, George?"

"All planned before you came in," returned the landlord. "You and your men know your way well enough to the Priory ruins: that's your chart."

"And our horses?"

"All ready for you at Kittumses Corner, down in the old hollow, along with some of the gipsy boys."

"Rare fun if the gipsy boys should take a fancy to ride off with them," said Carter, with a laugh.

"They daren't; but hold your tongue, can't you? There's Moses Lee outside."

"There may be twenty Moses Lees for anything I care," said the forgerman, carelessly. "However, the horses are all right, I dare say. I hope our hide will be as safe."

"What do you mean by that, Carter?" demanded William Crickett, gruffly.

"There, you needn't put up your feathers, old fellow. I didn't mean anything against you; but I mean what I say, for all that. I don't think the Priory ruins are safe."

"What do you mean by not safe?" repeated the disguised butler.

"I don't like so many people poking and prying about them old ruins. Why, you told me yourself what a

fright you was in soon after that run, when the place was chock full, a'most, and young Harry Rivers went searching about."

"Harry Rivers is far enough off now," observed Crickett, calmly.

"That may be; but there's others. There's that London lawyer as was hanging about at the time of that snow-storm, and was up at the Priory along with your mistresses. He is a precious deal too knowing."

"Too knowing to be meddling and making; and, come to that, don't you think Mr. Wainfleet knows well enough what uses the old ruins are put to?"

"I reckon he does," interposed Parsley, with a laugh of unconcern.

"What's to hinder him from splitting, then?" asked Carter.

"What should he split for? How much would his neck be worth when he comes about here if he was to?" demanded Crickett. "There's no fear of the lawyer," he added.

"For all that, I don't hold that the ruins are too safe; and we'd ought to look out for another hide. Why shouldn't the old fox at Fairbourne take some of the cargo in sometimes?"

"If you wasn't a stupid-head, Carter, you wouldn't ask," said Mr. Crickett, not very courteously; but it was taken in good part. The stupid-head only asked—

"Why not?"

"Because 'tis safer for him to keep out of it, a deal," interposed Parsley, with a laugh.

"I don't hold with a man having more than half the profits, and none of the risk," said the forgerman.

"You don't see things properly," said the spruce draper, again joining in the conversation. "Our friend (we won't mention names, but we'll say the old fox, if you like) does a good deal better for us than by running the same vulgar risks that you and I do—"

"You, Master Wincheap!" This was spoken with huge disdain. "You talk about running vulgar risks! You, with your nightcap in your pocket, ready, as soon as we have turned out, to turn in to the snugest bed in 'The Squirrel!'"

"Just so, friend Carter," said the little draper, unmoved. "I take care of my head, seeing that it has to contrive for your safety; you work with your great body for our joint advantage; and our friend the fox, as you are pleased to call him, works with his long purse; and though he hasn't so many brains as—"

"There, that'll do, Master Wincheap; we all know that you don't think small beer of yourself, anyhow," interposed Mr. Crickett; "and as to you, Carter, you talk about the hide at the ruins not being safe: I only wish your men were all as safe as that is."

"What do you mean? Who isn't safe? Speak out, Mr. Crickett, and don't keep blinking like an owl in daylight. Who isn't safe, I say?" said Carter, earnestly.

"You want me to speak, do you?"

"Yes, I do, since you've come to suspecting," retorted the forgerman.

"Where's Tom Carey to-night?" hissed Mr. Crickett.

"Tom Carey! Ah, I forgot, you have got a spite against him for that shaking he gave you—and served you right too. Where's Tom Carey? He'll be here in good time."

"Why didn't he come with you?" demanded Mr. Wincheap, who was listening with interest, and some trepidation as well, when suspicion of treachery was hinted at.

"Because he had some business of his own to attend to. Don't fret about him: he's all right, I tell you."

"And I tell you that I don't believe in him," retorted Mr. Crickett, spitefully. "He's too much along with that Methodist parson to please me; and if he doesn't turn traitor some of these days—"

"If he does, we'll serve him as they served the excise-man awhile ago, by all accounts," said the forgerman, with a dark frown on his countenance.

"Take care he doesn't hear what you say, Will," said the landlord of "The Squirrel," who had slipped out into the kitchen and now returned. "Tom Carey is in there: he's just come; and it is about time for you to think of starting; 'tis getting on for twelve, and all the out-lookers are come in."

There was a short bustle after this, with a clinking of glasses. Then one detachment after another of men, under their several leaders, drew off; and in less than half an hour "The Squirrel" stables were empty, and Mr. Parsley's only remaining guests were Mr. Wincheap and William Crickett; and these were presently despatched rather unceremoniously by the landlord.

"Now, Mr. Wincheap, 'tis time for you to be tying on that nightcap Will Carter talked about, and for you, Master Crickett, to be off to the Priory. There's work for you to do there before daybreak, and I must put out my lights."

And so "The Squirrel" sunk to rest.

THE MARRIAGE IN CANA OF GALILEE.

WHAT was it, Lord, upon the brink
Of thy first glory there,
That made thee even seem to shrink
From thy mild mother's prayer?
What linked the thought of coming pain
With what she smiled to say,
And threw thy dying hour so plain
Across that bridal day?

Was it the loved and low farewell
That seemed to be forecast,
Because thy first glad miracle
Was all too like the last?
Was it thy human spirit saw,
With vision too Divine,
The spear that from thy heart should draw
The water and the wine?

The common words thy mother spake,
In speech with common men,
But once across the silence break,
And all is still again.
We listen to her mild command:—
We are thy servants too.
Speak words that we can understand,
And we will hear and do.

M. P.

THE ZOLLVEREIN.

IN the political union formed in 1815, and known as the Germanic Confederation,[†] Austria, whether by right or by courtesy, is recognised as the leading State. In virtue of this chief position she discharges the office of perpetual President of the Federal Diet. Prussia, though nominally holding in the Confederation a secondary place, has yet contrived, by her persistent and successful efforts in establishing and acting as the parental protector of the Zollverein, or German Customs Union, not only vastly to increase her commercial prosperity, but to add largely to her power and political influence.

Prior to 1814 the "Continental System" upheld by Napoleon had the effect of nearly excluding British

* "His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it."—St. John ii. 5.

† For an account of the Confederation, see "Leisure Hour," No. 658.

manufactures from central Europe. Under its shelter industries of various kinds were fostered in the German States. The fall of Napoleon led to the abrogation of his policy of exclusion, and these industries speedily suffered from the introduction of English goods, which, to a large extent, undersold and displaced the native manufactures in the markets of the Fatherland. Distress was especially felt in the Rhenish provinces, which were doubly injured, by the crushing competition of England, and by the withdrawal of the markets of France consequent on the transference of these provinces to Prussia. From a regard to the interests of her acquired territories, Prussia was induced to adopt a protective policy; and accordingly, in 1818, she issued a new tariff, which considerably augmented the duties on imports into her dominions.

This act on the part of Prussia, while throwing a shield around her own manufactures, had the effect of aggravating the difficulties of the surrounding minor States. Excluded from Prussia, as from France and Austria, they were well-nigh shut up to their own domestic markets. Opposition to the Prussian policy, and the pressure of distress, called into existence an Association which gradually numbered six thousand members, having for its object to force the subject of the unsatisfactory commercial relations of the German States upon the attention of the Governments. The ancient town of Nuremberg, in Bavaria, was the head-quarters of this body. Prussia, become perforce protective, had yet in 1816 proposed to the Diet to establish free trade in the necessities of life, within the bounds of the Confederation. Matters, however, were then not ripe for so great a reform. From 1819 to 1826 protracted negotiations took place between various States, with the view of establishing a community of customs duties; but so great were the difficulties arising from jealousy and supposed rival interests, that no practical result was attained. The Nuremberg Association having appealed to the Congress assembled at Vienna in 1820, to the Diet, and to the separate Governments, without success, at length, in 1827, reaped some fruit from its labours. In that year was established a union between Würtemberg and Bavaria, known as the Southern Customs Union. Prussia had also for a number of years been actively pursuing a similar object in North Germany. The value of her Rhenish provinces was considerably diminished so long as they were commercially separated by intervening States from Prussia proper. Repeated offers she accordingly made to these States to adopt her tariff and share in the produce of the general revenue. Hesse-Darmstadt yielded to her representations; and in 1828 was formed the Prusso-Hessian league. Another union was in the same year constructed by Hanover and Saxony, together with several small adjoining States, called the Mittel-Verein. Thus three distinct Customs Unions at this time existed within the bounds of the Confederation. Prussia was far from satisfied with this state of matters, and did not cease to use her influence to induce Würtemberg and Bavaria to join the league of which she was the head. This object she accomplished. State after State was also, by the same means, detached from the Mittel-Verein, which was at length dissolved. By a treaty dated 22nd March, 1833, Prussia subsequently succeeded in binding nearly all the States which had composed these various unions into the great league of the Zollverein (toll-alliance), which came into full operation on the 1st of January, 1834. The Duchy of Nassau, lying to the south of the Rhenish provinces, and the Grand Duchy of Baden, forming the south-western extremity of German territory, connected themselves with

the Zollverein in 1835. In 1836 Frankfort adhered, Brunswick and Lippe-Schaumburg in 1841, and Luxemburg in the year following. Hanover joined on the 1st January, 1854. In establishing for herself a commercial protectorate independent of the Diet, and comprehending nearly all the States which own its authority, the persevering exertions of Prussia through many years have thus been crowned with complete success.

The only States excepted are, in the north, Holstein, Oldenburg,* Mecklenburg, Hamburg, Lubeck, and Bremen; and, in the south, the small principality of Lichtenstein, which is connected with the Austrian customs. Austria herself, though not a member of the Zollverein, is yet in a certain way connected with it by a treaty made with Prussia in 1853, which regulates the transmission of articles of trade in their respective territories. The Duchy of Lauenburg, lately belonging to Denmark, is connected neither with the Prussian nor the Danish Custom-house system. This arises from its situation on the Elbe, and its position between Hamburg and Lubeck. The revenues it levies on the transit of merchandise between these cities, and from its tolls on the river, are larger than would fall to its share were it to become a member of the great league; it therefore wisely retains its independent commercial position.

While the Zollverein owes its existence to the necessities of Germany for free intercourse, to the progress of civilization, and to the growth of material prosperity, yet the more immediate causes of its origin were, on the one hand, the desire of Prussia for political preponderance in North Germany, and, on the other, with hostile tariffs in other countries, the demand for protection for home manufactures. The Zollverein tariff is essentially protective: it is based on that established by Prussia on behalf of the Rhenish provinces in 1818. And, so far from any tendency being exhibited in the direction of free trade by this great commercial association, it has increased the duties on several articles, such as iron, cotton, and yarns. At present it charges, on an average, from thirty to fifty per cent. on the real value of imports. The tariff is arranged under forty-three different heads. Duties are levied by the imposition of a fixed rate on the *weight* of manufactured goods, without reference to quality or fluctuation of prices. The manufactures of Germany being generally of a coarse kind, the effect of this system is well-nigh to exclude from the German markets those articles which would otherwise compete with the native producer. Cotton manufactures are charged £7 10s. per hundredweight; woollens, £4 10s.; linens, from £1 16s. to £3 6s.; silks, £16 10s.; and hardware, £8 5s. per hundredweight. Estimated *ad valorem*, the duty on cottons varies in this way from 3½ to 120 per cent., and on woollens from 20 to 50 per cent. On raw materials and half-manufactured articles, to which more industry may be applied, the duties are comparatively low: some, indeed, are admitted free.

Apart from the advantages to the home manufacture of a tariff so high as to be protective, and in some cases prohibitory, the league has conferred signal benefits of a less questionable kind on the trade of Germany. It has removed the numerous custom-houses, with their conflicting tariffs, which, prior to its formation, covered the frontier lines of the States. The free exchange of commodities has resulted in improved communications. Railways have been constructed, roads amended and formed, canals opened, and steam conveyance by these channels, and by rivers, has been greatly accelerated and extended. The facilities for smuggling, so prevalent

* There is every probability of Oldenburg, at an early period, joining the Zollverein.

under the old system, have been removed. Free trade throughout the greater part of Germany has tended to the diffusion of knowledge and the removal of prejudice, by increasing intercourse and the interchange of ideas, and consequently has produced a clearer recognition of mutual dependence and unity of interests, which as links bind State to State, and form the best guarantee of amity and good-will among the German people.

So long as the minor powers find it to be for their interests, they will doubtless continue to adhere to the Prussian customs league. That it is to the advantage of the people of the small States is certain; and the fact that at less cost the Governments of these States derive larger customs revenues than they could possibly do if they remained apart, forms a double reason for their continued connection with the Zollverein. States which, from their internal position, have no frontier line, are saved all expense in the collection of customs. Those States only which touch on territory out of the Union pale are charged with the duty of collecting the revenue.

The revenue, when collected, forms a common fund, and this fund is divided among the commercially allied States, in proportion to the population of each State. An exception to this simple principle is made in the case of Frankfurt, which receives its quota under a special arrangement. Prussia, though at the head of the Union, profits less from it, as concerns the receipt of revenue, than any other State: indeed, it is supposed that in this respect she makes a positive annual pecuniary sacrifice. This is owing to her extensive frontier, and the expense consequently incurred in maintaining a large staff of officers for purposes of collection. Her share of the general revenue is about fifty-four per cent.

A Congress formed of the plenipotentiaries of the associated States is held yearly in June, for the purpose of sanctioning the changes which may be found necessary: the larger and smaller States send each alike one representative. All such proposed changes are decided by a majority of votes. The disinterestedness of Prussia is further shown from the fact that at this Congress, notwithstanding the magnitude of her interests, she contents herself with only one vote. This, however, but confirms what we have before said, that the object of that power in upholding the Zollverein is at least as much political as fiscal or commercial; for, whatever sacrifice she may make on behalf of the other States, she receives compensation in their adherence to herself. The lesser sovereignties finding a main source of their revenues dependent on their connection with Prussia, naturally cling to her as supporters of her policy, whether in peace or war. The Zollverein is a league for the collection of customs duties only. Each Government has its own separate revenue system, and maintains its own officers for raising taxes other than customs. Land tax, excise duties, stamp, postage, and other duties, when levied, are paid direct into the treasury of each particular State.

Treaties of commerce have from time to time been made between the States of the Zollverein and other countries; but, by a fundamental principle of the league, no States but those of Germany can be admitted. It is thus not less commercial than national; and, in the absence of that political unity to which Germans aspire, it furnishes a real and substantial union, based on their material interests and conducive to their prosperity. The Zollverein is thus a popular league. Unlike the Confederation, it is what it professes to be, a reality. It is useful, efficient, and practical. By the common weights it has established, and the "Union's money" it circulates throughout Germany, it, in a certain way, ministers

to the sentiment of nationality, and at the same time facilitates the operations of trade, and promotes the general convenience and comfort of the great body of the people.

The duration of the convention in virtue of which the Zollverein was constituted was provisionally fixed for 1st January, 1842, and if not then terminated by two years' previous notice, it was to be held as binding for twelve years more, and so on from time to time, for a further period of twelve years.

The Austrian frontier touching on States which have a low tariff is about 2300 English miles. Austria has recently shown some desire of adopting a more liberal commercial policy, and of forming a customs alliance with these bordering States.

In conjunction with Bavaria, she issued invitations to the members of the Zollverein to meet at Munich, with the view of agreeing to a convention for a period of twelve years. The Conference met on the 19th of June last; but the only Governments represented were Austria, Bavaria, Würtemberg, Hesse-Darmstadt, and Nassau. It was supposed that Austria would reduce her tariff by one-half; but, owing to the influence of her protectionist manufacturers, this was found to be impracticable; and so no satisfactory result could be arrived at by the plenipotentiaries at Munich. Prussia has already obtained the signatures of a number of her present associates, and will also doubtless secure the assent of all to the continuance of the Zollverein for a further period from the 31st of December, 1865. She thus maintains her position at the head of the great customs league, nor for a long time to come is she likely to be displaced by any other German power.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

II.

We must now turn to our author's longer poems, on which, even to a greater degree than his exquisite lyrics, his fame will permanently rest. Take that deserved favourite, "Evangeline." What noble music is that opening to "Evangeline:"—

"This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks,
Bearded with moss and in garments green, indistinct in the twilight,
Stand like Druids of old, with voices sad and prophetic,
Stand like keepers hoar, with beards that rest on their bosoms.
Sent from its rocky caverns the deep-voiced neighbouring ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the forest.

"This is the forest primeval; but where are the beasts that beneath it
Leaped like the roe when he hears in the woodland the voice of the
hunter?"

Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of Arcadian farmers—
Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the woodlands,
Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting an image of heaven?"

How admirably these lines exhibit the ancient hexameter metre which Coleridge, after some German author (we are sorry to say he did not acknowledge the obligation), has thus described and exemplified:—

"Slowly it bears us along on its broad and measureless billows,
Nothing before and nothing behind but the sky and the ocean."

To our mind this opening of "Evangeline" is the finest part of it. Notwithstanding its successful employment in "Evangeline," we entirely doubt whether the hexameter metre can be popularized in our literature. We may give a remarkable illustration. Of late several attempts have been made to translate Homer. The least happy has been that which sought to reproduce the old Greek bard in his ancient hexameter dress. This was not so successful as either the employment of the hendecasyllabic metre by Dean Alford, or the Spenserian stanza by Mr. Worsley.



MR. LONGFELLOW'S HOUSE AT OLD CAMBRIDGE.

The "Golden Legend," perhaps more than any other of his works, exhibits the peculiar genius of Mr. Longfellow, both in his display of quaint, recondite erudition, and also in his wealth of imagery and mastery of metre. Mr. Longfellow has here shown himself a diligent student of mediæval literature, and a consummate artist in his use of it. He has so carefully reproduced the religious and scholastic life of the dark ages (as we must still persist in calling them, in spite of their admirers), that the poem has on this account a peculiar literary and historical value of its own. We wish we had space to quote the beautiful but brief poem of the "Monk Felix," inserted in the "Golden Legend," who, entranced by the song of a heaven-sent bird, listened and listened on, so that the flight of years seemed but a brief moment, and, returning back to the convent, found that all things had grown old and altered. Dr. Trench, Archbishop of Dublin, has in his poems given a long version of the same beautiful but fanciful legend; but his success falls very far below that of Mr. Longfellow. We must express our regret that, in his account of the miracle plays, Mr. Longfellow has employed those irreverent legends which have been vulgarized by the objectionable publications of Mr. Hone. Often as the Rhine has been described, and often as Mr. Longfellow has alluded to it, there has been no better description in brief than that by Walter the minstrel, in the "Golden Legend."

We have no space left to revert to "Hiawatha"—that

poem so exquisite in its descriptions of Indian scenery and life, and so wearisome in its too constant employment of Indian names. Indeed, it is time that we should draw these imperfect remarks to a conclusion. Our author shall himself assist us in a farewell glance at the characteristics of his writings. Some verses in his beautiful poem "The Day is Done" are applicable enough. In reading passages from Mr. Longfellow's writings, it must be said that they appear to us to proceed—

"Not from the grand old masters,
Not from the bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
Through the corridors of time."

But though he does not belong to the sparse band of the foremost sons of song, no mean place will be allotted to him in the second rank. His own lines will describe his genius and its beneficial effect, although they convey no mention of his learning, and hardly do justice to the great qualities which will always make him a standard American classic:—

"Read from some humbler poet,
Whose song gushed from his heart
As showers from the clouds of summer,
Or tears from the eyelids start."

"Such songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
That follows after prayer."

"And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares that infest the day
Shall fold their tents like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away."

Since the foregoing article was written we have read Mr. Longfellow's latest work, "Tales of a Wayside Inn."

The structure of the poem is one which has been often used—a number of characters assembled together, each telling a tale. In a wayside American inn of the old type there are brought together, with the landlord, a student, a Spanish Jew, a Sicilian, a musician, a theologian, and a poet. These various personages are described in the prelude, part of which we give, with the Landlord's tale:—

THE WAYSIDE INN.

One autumn night, in Sudbury town,
Across the meadows bare and brown,
The windows of the wayside inn
Gleamed red with fire-light through the leaves
Of woodbine, hanging from the eaves,
Their crimson curtains rent and thin.

As ancient is this hostelry
As any in the land may be,
Built in the old Colonial day,
When men lived in a grander way,
With ampler hospitality;
A kind of old Hobgoblin Hall,
Now somewhat fallen to decay,
With weather-stains upon the wall,
And stairways worn, and crazy doors,
And creaking and uneven floors,
And chimneys huge, and tiled, and tall.

A region of repose it seems,
A place of slumber and of dreams,
Remote among the wooded hills!
For there no noisy railway speeds,
Its torch-race scattering smoke and gleeds;
But noon and night the panting teams
Stop under the great oaks, that throw
Tangles of light and shade below,
On roofs and doors and window-sills.
Across the road the barns display
Their lines of stalls, their mows of hay,
Through the wide doors the breezes blow,
The wattled cocks strut to and fro,
And, half-effaced by rain and shine,
The Red Horse prances on the sign.
Round this old-fashioned, quaint abode
Deep silence reigned, save when a gust
Went rushing down the county road,
And skeletons of leaves, and dust,
A moment quickened by its breath,
Shuddered and danced their dance of death,
And through the ancient oaks o'erhead
Mysterious voices moaned and fled.

But from the parlour of the inn
A pleasant murmur smote the ear,
Like water rushing through a weir,
Oft interrupted by the din
Of laughter and of loud applause,
And, in each intervening pause,
The music of a violin.
The fire-light, shedding over all
The splendour of its ruddy glow,
Filled the whole parlour, large and low;
It gleamed on wainscot and on wall;
It touched with more than wonted grace
Fair Princess Mary's pictured face;
It bronzed the rafters overhead;
On the old spinet's ivory keys
It played inaudible melodies;
It crowned the sombre clock with flame,
The hands, the hours, the maker's name,
And painted with a livelier red
The Landlord's coat-of-arms again;
And, flashing on the window-pane,
Emblazoned with its light and shade
The jovial rhymes, that still remain,
Writ near a century ago,
By the great Major Molineaux,
Whom Hawthorne has immortal made.

Before the blazing fire of wood
Erect the rapt musician stood;

And ever and anon he bent
His head upon his instrument,
And seemed to listen, till he caught
Confessions of its secret thought—
The joy, the triumph, the lament,
The exultation and the pain;
Then, by the magic of his art,
He soothed the throbbings of its heart,
And lalled it into peace again.

Around the fireside at their ease
There sat a group of friends, entranced
With the delicious melodies,
Who from the far-off noisy town
Had to the wayside inn come down,
To rest beneath its old oak-trees.
The fire-light on their faces glanced,
Their shadows on the wainscot danced,
And, though of different lands and speech,
Each had his tale to tell, and each
Was anxious to be pleased and please.
And, while the sweet musician plays,
Let me in outline sketch them all,
Perchance uncouthly as the blaze
With its uncertain touch portrays
Their shadowy semblance on the wall.

Then follows the description of the Landlord and the several guests, ending with the Musician:

Last the Musician, as he stood
Illumed by that fire of wood;
Fair-haired, blue-eyed, his aspect blithe,
His figure tall and straight and lithe,
And every feature of his face
Revealing his Norwegian race;
A radiance, streaming from within,
Around his eyes and forehead beamed;
The Angel with the violin,
Painted by Raphael, he seemed.
He lived in that ideal world
Whose language is not speech, but song:
Around him evermore the throng
Of elves and sprites their dances whirled;
The Strömka sang, the cataract hurled
Its headlong waters from the height;
And mingled in the wild delight
The scream of sea-birds in their flight,
The rumour of the forest trees,
The plunge of the implacable seas,
The tumult of the wind at night,
Voices of old, like trumpets blowing,
Old ballads, and wild melodies
Through mist and darkness pouring forth,
Like Elivagar's river flowing
Out of the glaciers of the North.
The instrument on which he played
Was in Cremona's workshops made,
By a great master of the past,
Ere yet was lost the art divine;
Fashioned of maple and of pine,
That in Tyrolian forests vast
Had rocked and wrestled with the blast:
Exquisite was it in design,
A marvel of the luteist's art,
Perfect in each minutest part;
And in its hollow chamber, thus,
The maker from whose hands it came
Had written his unrivalled name—
"Antonius Stradivarius."
And when he played the atmosphere
Was filled with magic, and the ear
Caught echoes of that Harp of Gold
Whose music had so weird a sound,
The hunted stag forgot to bound,
The leaping rivulet backward rolled,
The birds came down from bush and tree,
The dead came from beneath the sea,
The maiden to the harper's knee!
The music ceased; the applause was loud,
The pleased musician smiled and bowed;
The wood-fire clapped its hands of flame,
The shadows on the wainscot stirred,
And from the harpsichord there came
A ghostly murmur of acclaim,
A sound like that sent down at night
By birds of passage in their flight,
From the remotest distance heard.

After a pause, a clamour began for the Landlord's tale, who told a spirit-stirring incident of the War of Independence:—

PAUL REVERE'S RIDE.

Listen, my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five.
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend, "If the British march
By land or sea from the town to-night,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry-arch
Of the North Church tower as a signal light—
One if by land, and two if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country-folk to be up and to arm."

Then he said, "Good-night!" and with muffled oar
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose above the bay,
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay
The "Somerset," British man-of-war;
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon like a prison-bar,
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile his friend, through alley and street,
Wanders and watches with eager ears,
Till in the silence around him he hears
The muster of men at the barrack-door,
The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,
And the measured tread of the grenadiers,
Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed to the tower of the church,
Up the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,
To the belfry-chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the sombre rafters, that round him made
Masses and moving shapes of shade—
Up the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen and look down
A moment on the roofs of the town,
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead,
In their night-encampment on the hill,
Wrapped in silence so deep and still
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,
The watchful night-wind, as it went
Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper, "All is well!"
A moment only he feels the spell
Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent
On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the bay—
A line of black that bends and floats
On the rising tide, like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse's side,
Now gazed at the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle-girth;
But mostly he watched with eager search
The belfry-tower of the Old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral and sombre and still.
And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns!

A hurry of hoofs in a village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet;
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed in his flight
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.
He has left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,
Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides;
And under the alders, that skirt its edge,
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.

It was twelve by the village clock
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.
He heard the crowing of the cock,
And the barking of the farmer's dog,
And felt the damp of the river fog
That rises after the sun goes down.
It was one by the village clock
When he galloped into Lexington.
He saw the gilded weathercock
Swim in the moonlight as he passed,
And the meeting-house windows, blank and bare
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadows brown.
And one was safe and asleep in his bed
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,
Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket-ball.

You know the rest. In the books you have read
How the British regulars fired and fled—
How the farmers gave them ball for ball,
From behind each fence and farm-yard wall,
Chasing the red-coats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.

So through the night rode Paul Revere;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm—
A cry of defiance, and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo for evermore!
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

Some connecting verses or interludes unite the several tales, which are as follows: the Student's tale, "The Falcon of Ser Federigo;" the Spanish Jew's tale, "The Legend of Rabbi Ben Levi;" the Sicilian's tale, "King Robert of Sicily;" the Musician's tale, "The Saga of King Olaf;" the Theologian's tale, "Torquemada;" and the Poet's tale, "The Birds of Killingworth."

We cannot but regret to find that in this, his latest work, Mr. Longfellow exhibits, in even greater degree than in his earlier poems, the dreary spirit of the mere religion of nature. There is a profession of respect for Christianity, but there is an absence of the distinctive truths of revelation. This may be seen in the few lines about "The Theologian" at the wayside inn.

"He preached to all men everywhere
The gospel of the Golden Rule,
The new Commandment given to men,
Thinking the deed, and not the creed,
Would help us in the hour of need."

As if either creed or deed would avail in the hour of trial or of judgment. In the glad light of the Saviour's words, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," it is strange to read the sad and heavy strains of the two closing poems in the volume. In regard to the soul, and its rest, apart from the gospel of peace, too truly is it here said—

"By the cares of yesterday
Each to-day is heavier made;
Till at length it is or seems
Greater than our strength can bear!
As the burden of our dreams,
Pressing on us everywhere."

Still more melancholy is the tone of the brief piece which is the latest utterance of the poet:—

THE "of our penden consum bore s swelling becomi oak," our m propell flag of the bre aloft in must h Pre-en depend of the slaugh hostile terrors and th will ha predic As willing sacrific as pec tory, b mate f with th traditi the tru know fathers

have n such a within they m into th shot a cision have t

WEARINESS.

O little feet! that such long years
Must wander on through hopes and fears,
Must ache and bleed beneath your load;
I, nearer to the wayside inn
Where toil shall cease and rest begin,
Am weary, thinking of your road!

O little hands! that, weak or strong,
Have still to serve or rule so long,
Have still so long to give or ask;
I, who so much with book and pen
Have toiled among my fellow-men,
Am weary, thinking of your task.

O little hearts! that throb and beat
With such impatient, feverish heat,
Such limitless and strong desires;
Mine, that so long has glowed and burned,
With passions into ashes turned
Now covers and conceals its fires.

O little souls! as pure and white
And crystalline as rays of light
Direct from heaven, their source Divine;
Refracted through the mist of years,
How red my setting sun appears,
How lurid looks this soul of mine!

WOOD AND IRON.

THE "wooden walls of Old England," so long the pride of our forefathers and the bulwarks of our island's independence—the stately floating citadels, each of which consumed five thousand full-grown oaks in building, and bore some thousand men to battle under clouds of swelling canvas—are destined to become, and are fast becoming, mere matters of history. The old "hearts of oak," which have been the creators and maintainers of our maritime supremacy, are receding at length before the modern inventions of the steam-engine and the screw-propeller and the productions of the blast-furnace. The flag of England, if it continue to brave the battle and the breeze through the coming centuries, must be borne aloft in vessels of iron, and the thunders of Britannia must be hurled from ramparts of ponderous iron mail. Pre-eminence in naval warfare will no longer so much depend on the bull-dog courage which flies at the throat of the enemy and drags him prostrate; the terrible onslaught of boarders, whose rushing descent upon the hostile deck was the prelude to surrender, will lose its terrors with the foe, because it will be less often possible; and the whole plan and system of warfare upon the ocean will have to be developed anew, under untried perils and predicaments which as yet are but dimly foreshadowed.

As a people we have been somewhat slow, and unwilling, perhaps, in recognising the fact that the self-sacrificing and sustained valour which we have considered as peculiarly British will not always secure the victory, but that science and skill, together with consummate forethought and precaution, must go hand in hand with them, if we are to hold our own and maintain our traditional predominance at sea. But we know at length the truth in regard to this all-important subject; we know that the armaments which in the days of our fathers could—

"thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,"

have no longer any such terrible power; that, indeed, if such armaments were to approach with hostile intention within a mile of the forts and land-batteries of our day, they must either retreat with ignominious haste, or "melt into the yeast of waves" under the deluge of plunging shot and bursting shell rained upon them with the precision of doom from modern artillery. Recent events have taught us, too, that in combats at sea, and duels of

ship with ship, the old tactics have to be abandoned as of no avail. On the American coast we have seen the iron "Merrimac" crushing the old-fashioned man-of-war and sinking her with a single stroke; on the Dutch coast we have seen the *Dane* defeating the Austrian by incendiary shells poured in from the distance of half a mile; and in our own Channel we have seen the "Alabama" despatched to the bottom by the ponderous bolts of the "Kearsage." From facts like these, and from multiplied experiments both on sea and shore, our rulers have arrived at the conviction that the old conditions of naval warfare have passed away; that our long-cherished "hearts of oak" could not exist an hour under the missiles of late invented; and that nothing short of iron mail, braced on bulwarks of massive strength and solidity, will repel the crushing weight and impetus of the shot discharged from modern artillery. Things being so, we are forced to acknowledge that the curtain has fallen upon many a past scene of naval strife in which we figured as conquerors; that the wolf-like dash of Blake, the dogged persistence of old Benbow, the Nelsonian practice of lashing your vessel to that of the foe and fighting it out yard-arm to yard-arm—all these things are passing away, and will have to be historically enshrined among the daring deeds of the Norsemen and exploits of the Vikings. The hand-to-hand grapple of brute force has had its day, and the "science of destruction" is stepping into its place.

For these reasons—and they are all-sufficient, being compulsory—we are reconstructing our navy, partly by coating old vessels of wood with iron mail, and partly by building new vessels of iron, strengthened with mail panoply, presumably, at least, impenetrable by shot. In all our war-vessels we supplement the moving power of sails by the addition of steam, preferring, for obvious reasons, the screw-propeller to paddles, and supplying them with engines of power sufficient to ensure a high rate of speed. A glance at the "Navy List" of the present year will show to what extent we have progressed in this great national work, and what is the condition of our naval force at the present time. The list of steam-ships and vessels, and of sailing-ships in commission, shows a total number of five hundred and fifty, of which two hundred and sixty-five are screw-steamers, the remainder being paddle-steamers and a few sailing-vessels unsupplied with steam. These vessels are of all sizes, varying from three or four hundred tons burden up to over six thousand tons. Of the whole number in commission, only fifty-four are iron or iron-cased ships; but among them are the huge "Warrior," of six thousand one hundred tons and one thousand two hundred and fifty horse power; and the "Minotaur," of six thousand six hundred and twenty tons and one thousand three hundred and fifty horse power; together with a number of other formidable ships approximating to these in destructive and defensive capacity. In addition to this large number of efficient ships, our naval force comprises a hundred and eighty-four screw-steam gun-boats of two hundred to two hundred and seventy tons burden each; while of sailing-ships not in commission there are eighty-one. To complete the grand total of ships and vessels adapted for purposes of war, we might add those appropriated for harbour service, and which are at present used as hulks, depôts, receiving-ships, sheer-vessels, target-ships, hospitals, floating chapels, etc., etc., and which number in all about one hundred and twenty.

The above is a truly enormous force, such as no other nation on the globe has ever been able to produce, and which no other people could make an efficient use of.

even if they had it in possession, because Great Britain alone could supply the necessary crews of seamen. France is our most formidable rival, and in the matter of iron ships of war is probably on a par with us; but she has not so vast a reserve of steam-ships and vessels of wood, while her system of supplying seamen by conscription is not calculated to insure the most efficient crews. If we were to compare our present naval force with that which served to maintain our supremacy in the days of Nelson, the latter would appear comparatively insignificant. The battle of Trafalgar was fought and won with twenty-seven ships against thirty-three, made up of the combined forces of France and Spain. It is questionable if, in addition to the force under Nelson, England could have raised another fleet equally formidable; while at the present time we can double the number of Nelson's fleet in iron or iron-cased ships alone, leaving five hundred war vessels, the far greater number of these steamers, in reserve, exclusive of gunboats and ships not in commission.

Vast as is this fleet, it is not more than is sufficient, looking to the naval forces of other powers. From the nature of our position among the nations, from our all-embracing commerce, which literally girdles the world, and from our consequent assailability on every side, we are bound either to maintain a navy sufficient to protect us at all points, and to make aggressions on the part of other powers impolitic, or else to submit to loss and injury, and eventually to national degradation. We owe our continuance in peace to the fact that we are prepared for war. The truth of the declaration made by Earl Russell lately, that the British fleet is "ready to go anywhere," is the one grand cause why, at the present moment, it is not required to go anywhere for a hostile purpose. The reason why we are not fighting is simply because we are in a condition to fight with tremendous effect; and it is morally certain that, were our rulers to allow the naval force of Britain to dwindle into only comparative importance, we should lose our best guarantee for the continuance of those "amicable relations" with our continental neighbours which are so essential to our prosperity. This statement is not very flattering to humanity, but it is the true one.

The transformation of our naval armaments from fleets of wood to fleets of iron will probably go on steadily until the wooden vessels are in the minority; though it is doubtful whether, even for war purposes, they will ever be wholly discarded, it being as yet uncertain whether they are not best adapted for distant expeditions. The change will not be a picturesque one. We shall lose something of grandeur in the impressive parade of a Channel fleet under a cloud of canvas shadowing the sea. There will be less display of that consummate nautical skill, so thrilling to beholders, when some hundred sail are seen tacking at once, in obedience to the admiral's signal, and the sunlight flashes suddenly from a thousand swelling sails, as the ships veer round and catch the gladdening beams. The black, stunted steam-funnels, with their swart, horizontal streamers of smoke, are but a sorry exchange for the tapering, skyward masts and floods of milk-white canvas; but in a matter of such moment we may be well content to barter pageantry for power, and, if we have somewhat clipped the wings of our sea-eagles, may console ourselves with the thought that they are all the better fitted to swoop with irresistible force upon the foe.

While we see that iron and steam are doing so much to shape the destinies of war, it is pleasant to reflect that they have long been doing even far more to spread the arts of peace, by the promotion of commerce and civiliza-

tion. By steam we have bridged the ocean, and brought the most distant parts of the globe into familiar relations with ourselves. In iron vessels we send our merchandise and our enterprising colonists over every sea; thus, whether avowedly or not, doing our best to unite all mankind together in the bonds of mutual interest. When this union is complete the war spirit will die out of itself; and when—as we know shall come to pass—the spirit of Christian love shall influence the whole earth, there shall be no more war on land or sea, and every keel that ploughs the deep shall be laden with the testimonies of peace and good-will from man to his fellow-man. Let us hope and pray for that good time.

THE PYRENEES.

II.

We climb up into a diligence again—this time a French one—and find ourselves, on a very hot day, on the road from Dax to Pau. The country is flat, but well cultivated. For miles and miles we journey along a straight road lined with poplars. There is little to diversify the view. The poplars, with a most wearisome regularity, like French soldiers, seem as if stretching into infinity. One gets depressed by watching them; and, as the miles draw their weary length along, the exclamation involuntarily arises, "Shall we ever get to the end of these poplars?" We reach the little town of Orthez, with its Gothic bridge, and the remains of the famous castle built by Gaston de Foix, and inhabited by his descendant Phœbus Count de Foix in the time of Froissart, who was received into the household. Froissart gives a very particular account of what he saw and heard there and elsewhere in the Pyrenees; and, as far as his book alludes to the places he visited in this region, we know of nothing equal to it in point of interest. The chatty old knight is a most amusing companion; but one is startled at the illustrations his narratives supply of the foul spirit of barbarity which was mingled with the chivalrous refinement of the fourteenth century. It seems almost incredible, but so it is, that the knightly and gallant historian extols the count as a mirror of chivalry, though he himself relates of him that he stabbed his kinsman who refused to betray his trust, and killed with a knife, in a dark cell, his own son!

Here we get amidst the Bearnois, the quiet industrious peasantry who people the French side of the Lower Pyrenees. The costume strikes the traveller at once: the loose brown coat or gown of the men, with a hood attached like that of a Capuchin friar, the crimson sash round the waist, and the graceful head-dress of the women, which I leave a lady to describe:—"The head-dress for daily wear is usually a bright-red handkerchief, of that rich hue which is a medium between scarlet and crimson. On festival occasions this is changed for one of a lighter texture and more delicate colour. The manner in which it is put on is a mystery. It is wound so smoothly round the head as to display rather than conceal its form, even plainly showing the quantity of hair beneath it, and the manner in which it is braided into a graceful circlet at the back. It is fastened quite as artfully on one side, hanging in a long end with a gay border, or, on dress occasions, a handsome fringe, low on the shoulder. To see a young woman," says our authority, "with her nice shawl, her still nicer gloves, her pretty parasol, and characteristic head-dress, was quite refreshing after the miserable affectation of fashion, the paltry finery, the flowers, feathers, and dirty old gloves, or no gloves at all, of our dear England."

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We reached Pau in the evening, and found it to be a delightful place, deserving all that is said in praise of it. It stands on a hill. Some of the streets are on the declivity. The part where the diligence entered had a modern look; but, as the vehicle went groaning up the steep street, the old-fashioned quarters soon began to appear, and we found ourselves close to the romantic castle, which had been one of the first objects we had discerned on approaching the town. The view from the Grand Terrace of Pau, which is the place for fashionable promenade, is beautiful beyond description. A rich plain stretches at your feet, watered by the Gave. Woods, villages, cottages, and numerous rural objects diversify the foreground—all rich, when I saw it, in summer green—while, in the southern distance, dimly peering through the haze, are the gigantic mountains of the Pyrenean range. Of course we visited the castle, a place of abounding interest, from its quaint architecture, admirable preservation, appropriate fittings, antique and tasteful furniture, numerous curiosities and historical associations. We rambled from room to room, saw where the famous Henri IV first saw the light, and the shell cradle in which he was placed. Many a memento was noticed of the times of the French Reformation, in apartments now elegantly fitted up for the use of the French Emperor and Empress, who seem to love to entwine their names with those of the old French sovereign and other celebrities. But the weather was so hot at Pau that we could not do justice to the place, and were glad, as soon as possible, to hire a carriage and dash away into the heart of the Pyrenees, to breathe the fresh mountain air instead of the stifling heat of the town.

We travelled along a most beautiful road, bordered by thick woods and gently rounded hills, and also rich in streams and wild flowers, the former reeking from the heat, and sending up clouds of steam, as though the water were boiling. At times we were reminded of Wharfedale in Yorkshire, then of rocks in Derbyshire, and ever and anon we paused to look at the profusion of box-trees, and at the deep-green verdure, which lay over the meadows like thick-piled velvet, the mown hay also sending forth a most fragrant smell. The view from the brow of the hill at Sévignac, commanding the basin of the great valley of the Gave, is most sublime; and right ahead there are the Pyrenees, with some of the grandest of its points; the Pic du Midi d'Ossau, for example, coming full in view.

We stopped at the village of Louvie to lunch, and while there were overtaken by one of those magnificent thunder-storms which burst so suddenly on the continental traveller. We scarcely remember a thunder-storm having occurred in England at all equal to what we witnessed at Louvie, and another a few years ago at the foot of the Alps, in the town of Chiavenna. There is a little church at Bielle, just by, where four marble columns are pointed out which Henri IV, from old acquaintance and attachment to the valley, wished to have presented to him. "Our hearts," said the villagers, "and our goods, are all yours; dispose of them as you will; but these columns, they belong to God, and therefore in this matter we must refer you to him." At the end of the valley, which gets narrower as you proceed, the mountains closing in more and more—the Pyrenees now unmistakably revealing themselves—there lies embosomed in a sort of nook or ravine, closed, indeed almost crushed in, by the neighbouring rocky heights, that famous place for French fashionables seeking summer air and recreation, called Eaux-Bonnes. Eaux-Bonnes has all the luxuries of a French watering-place—capital lodgings, first-rate hotels, splendid *table-d'hôte*,

shops full of fancy articles, libraries, concerts, balls, and, of course, a spacious promenade in the centre of the village, shaded by rows of trees, and peopled, at the fashionable hour, by crowds of ladies and gentlemen, in all the glory of most expansive crinoline, diminutive bonnets, peg-top trousers, and fancy hats. A few hours and a night's rest in such a place sufficed: we were off early in the morning for a mountain excursion to Gabas and the Pic du Midi d'Ossau. We pass through another watering-place, the twin sister of Eaux-Bonnes, called Eaux-Chaudes. Murray is accurate when saying, "The approach to the Eaux-Chaudes is grand: the height and steepness of the mountains, now robed from top to bottom in box bushes, now starting out in lofty precipices of bare limestone scarred by the course of torrents, which at times descend in long falls like white ribbons, and the variety imparted to the road by the projecting shoulders round which it winds, give interest to this part of the journey." The gloomy portal of the valley, in which Eaux-Bonnes is crushed up even more than Eaux-Chaudes, is one of the finest points in the Pyrenees. The mountains on each side are very precipitous: they meet at the bottom, where the river Gave comes thundering along, little more than a fierce mountain torrent. Half-way up the mountain side, in the road cut out in the rocks, the precipitous heights shoot one thousand five hundred feet over your head. There is an ever-abiding gloom at this spot, and the solemnity of the scene is deepened by the awful roar of the waters. The ride from Eaux-Chaudes to Gabas is truly enchanting. The granite rocks hem you round, and their gigantic shoulders are all well clothed with vegetation: fir-trees, birch, beech, hazel, alder, oak, and a thick undergrowth of box-wood, with wild flowers in profusion. It is this abundance of vegetation, this gush and overflow of vegetable life, supplying such diversities of minute form and such flashes of manifold colour, that distinguish the Pyrenees from the Alps. We performed our journey on horseback, and, giving rein to the animal to go as he pleased along his well-known road (thoroughly macadamized, for the most part), we sat and mused, and drank in with avidity the delicious influences of this marvellous scene of beauty and sublimity. At Gabas we entered on a steep mule-path, and toiled up to the plateau, where you have a glorious view of the Pic du Midi. Lady Chatterton says it is worth going all the way from England to see it. We believe it is, on a fine morning such as that when we beheld it. The Pic du Midi is one of the grandest points of the Pyrenean range. It rises with singular abruptness, and is cleft asunder near the top. The snow lies sparkling in the clefts, at the base of the uppermost peak. Vast mountains covered with woods form buttresses round it, and at the foot you have a green plateau watered by mountain streams.

A much more formidable enterprise was undertaken next day. We determined on going to Panticosa, and started from the baths of Eaux-Chaudes very early in the morning. The early mornings in the Pyrenees, how delightful they are! The sky so clear, the air so fresh, the pass so bright and dewy, the gilded mountain tops so spirit-like in their celestial elevation. The route was to Gabas, as before; but there we turned off to the left by Le Port d'Anéou. We passed through a very grand defile of rocky mountain, and it was fine to watch the sun climbing up over those peaked and jagged summits. The views of the Pic du Midi, on the opposite side to that we saw the day before, were very beautiful. We rested for breakfast on a lofty point of the *col* we were crossing, and there had to dismiss our horses; for we were approaching the Spanish frontier, and were not

permitted to take the French beasts with us any farther. So, taking to our feet, which the nature of the road, now very steep and rugged, rendered desirable, we made our pilgrimage onwards to Spain again, and were soon on the other side of the frontier. We halted at the village of Salientes, one of several we had seen from the top of the mountain, dotting the far spread-out valley. It is a wretched place enough, though picturesque in appearance. The little street is only a narrow lane, with a most execrably irregular pavement of stones large and small, fixed with the sharp points upward, or loose, to the imminent peril of the pedestrian. The houses seem to be all wall—the windows looking out behind—and on reaching the village inn we found the entrance through a small, dirty court-yard, which conducted to the ground-floor of the house, paved with pebbles and forming a sort of stable. At the farther end was a dingy-looking flight of stairs or steps, which led to the first story—the part of the house inhabited—and there we found kitchen, *salle à manger*, and bed-rooms, all about equally black and forbidding. The heat was intense, and we wanted refreshment; but neither the accommodation nor the food was such as to detain us long. So, on a still empty stomach, we were glad to get away through the narrow, winding, hot lane, up to the church, which stood on an eminence at the back of the village. A miserable place it was, paved with pebbles, like the entrance of the house, with dirty, rickety-looking altars and furniture, yet possessing some early pictures—pre-Raphaelite—of considerable merit. We saw neither priest nor worshipper, and were impressed here, as well as elsewhere, with the neglected appearance of the Spanish village churches, so far inferior to the French. We walked on over mountain pathways towards Panticosa, and paused again and again, and with unspeakable delight, to catch glimpses of the plains of Aragon beyond the mountains to the south. We reached the village of Panticosa in the afternoon, about five o'clock, and there met, for the first time, a train of veritable Spanish mules, with their gaudy trappings setting off their sleek, shiny flanks, their sharp noses, and their long ears. Some were carrying baggage of different kinds, and many were bearing people in Spanish costume on their way to the baths. The muleteers were very picturesque, and altogether the scene was thoroughly characteristic of the country. We paused in the middle of the village, to make terms for mules to carry us up to the baths, about two hours' ride, rough and steep all the way. Our bargain made, we mounted, and set off in the rear of the party who had just passed us. And truly romantic it was, as we ascended higher and higher, to see in advance, clambering up the zig-zag road, the long line of beasts of burden, with their loads, their riders, and the attendant muleteers. We became accustomed to it afterwards; but at first the novelty of the sight made it singularly entertaining. Men were at work blasting the rocks as we made the ascent, and sending down fragments of stone across our pathway. Ever and anon they paused as we came in a line with their operations; but it was a perilous thing to cross that piece of road, and glad enough we were when we had left it behind us. As we neared the lofty point occupied by the baths, we were struck with the steepness of the rocks on both sides of the enormous ravine. It is said that nowhere in the Alps will a plumb-line swing more than two hundred or three hundred feet. The declivity of a mountain is certainly deceitful; but here it looked as though a plumb-line might be dropped many a thousand feet long.

On reaching the baths, we found they were situated in a gloomy region shut in by rocks, without any trees

or shrubs—all bare and grim and cold—a dull, death-looking lake or tarn lying in the basis, scooped out in this mountainous region. We have never been at St. Bernard; but the sight of Panticosa reminded me of the pictures of that Alpine solitude. Panticosa was St. Bernard without the snow and ice.

The arrangements at the baths seemed rather odd. On entering the building, we, with several other travellers, were shown into a small room or office, where a key was offered to us, on the principle of first come, first served. On the key was a number, and we were left to find, as best we could, whereabouts in the rambling establishment was the door the key was meant to open. At last, successful in the search, we settled down for the night in our destined apartment, having made distinct arrangements with the managers of the victualling department for the board, which we hire distinct from the bed.

BOSSUET, BISHOP OF MEAUX.

THERE are great men in history, in some points worthy of praise and imitation, though we may not approve of their character as a whole, nor sympathize with them in their public career. Such a man was Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux, the pride and ornament of the Gallican Church. Though keen in controversy, and harsh to those who differed from him, he may be regarded as a model of conscientious preparation for the sacred ministry, and of zeal in the performance of its functions. Of him truly might we bear record, in the words of Paul, that he had a zeal of God, though not according to knowledge.

Bossuet was born at Dijon in September, 1627, of a family distinguished in the Parliament of Burgundy. From his early childhood he was ardently devoted to study. The Jesuits, who were his first instructors, were not long in discovering in such a pupil the prognostics of his being a great man. With their usual procedure in laying hold of young men whom they judged might be of advantage to their schemes, they tried to allure young Bossuet to become a member of their society; but an uncle of his, who took charge of him, and who was well acquainted with the policy of the Jesuits, broke the spell at once by sending him to Paris.

As he intended to embrace the clerical profession, he pursued with keenness all the studies which he thought necessary, or even merely useful, for a minister of religion. With a lively relish, and almost a kind of passion, he began at the fountain head—the Holy Scriptures. He then studied the fathers, the schoolmen, and even the mystical writers. Of all the doctors of the church he most admired Augustine. He knew him by heart, continually quoted him, and found, as he said, an answer for everything in Augustine, and made his works his companions in all his journeyings. He knew that in the classical writers of heathen antiquity he must find his masters in eloquence, taste, and style, and he applied with his usual diligence to the study of their works. He preferred Homer to them all; but he read Virgil and Cicero with pleasure. He thought less of Horace, whom he judged rather as a severe moralist would judge, than as a man of taste. The Epicurean morality of Horace appeared to him more dangerous to virtue on account of the graces interspersed in his poetry.

He spared himself the trouble of studying mathematics, not from contempt of the science, but because it appeared to him of no use for religion. He made frequent sojourns at the Abbey of La Trappe, to accustom himself to privations, and to taste the luxury of retreat and obscurity.

His talent for the pulpit was early manifested. He was announced as a precocious orator at the Hôtel de Rambouillet; and there, with very little preparation, in the presence of a numerous and select assembly, he delivered with great applause a sermon on a given subject. He was only sixteen, and the hour of preaching was eleven at night, which made Voiture say he had never heard anybody before preach so soon or so late.

From the moment of Bossuet's appearance, the style of French preaching improved. He did not write out his sermons in full, but studied his subject carefully, and made short notes, on which he enlarged when warmed by the inspiration of the pulpit. He never preached the same sermon twice. His reputation reached the Court, and Louis XIV. a better judge than most of his courtiers, honoured him for his conduct at Versailles, where he was remarked for being assiduous in his duties at the altar or the pulpit, living in solitude, and not pressing forward for place or emolument. The king named him for Bishop of Condom. In 1671 he was admitted into the French Academy, and about the same time Louis appointed him preceptor to the dauphin, the heir of the crown. Persuaded that they who are intrusted with the education of one who is to be a ruler over nations are responsible for the happiness of millions, Bossuet neglected nothing that was calculated to form a just and well-instructed monarch. He resigned his bishopric in order to give his whole attention to his task, and received in exchange a very small abbacy, but sufficient to satisfy his very moderate desires. He returned to his early studies that he might teach them the better to his pupil. His enemies gave out that he was teaching him very useless things, such as what was the name of Vaugirard in the time of the Druids. To refute this calumny it is sufficient to read his celebrated discourse on universal history, in which he deals not in minute and frivolous details, so dear to small minds, but with a rapid glance judges of legislators and conquerors, kings and nations, the crimes and the virtues of men, and sketches with an energetic pencil, time-devouring and ingulfing all, the hand of God on human greatness, and kingdoms that die like their masters.

He was accused of having spoken too much of the Jews, and too little of the nations who have made ancient history so interesting. His answer was, that if he appeared to sacrifice the universe to one nation whom all the rest affected to despise, it was because they were the only nation to whom the true God was known, and therefore it was his duty not only to God, whose minister he was, but also to France, whose lot was intrusted to his lessons, to show the young prince that there is an Almighty and Eternal One, who strictly observes the doings of rulers, and who will be their Judge.

Bossuet was engaged with many an adversary and in many a cause in which we do not sympathize with him. We are not recommending his objects of liking or dislike, but only setting up the energy of his conduct as an example which pious and faithful ministers would do well to imitate. He wasted little time in the amusements of life, and paid few visits. One day he carelessly asked his gardener some question about his trees. The man replied, "Monseigneur, if I planted St. Augustine and St. Jeromes, you would come and see them; but, as for your own trees, you give yourself very little trouble."

In his latter days he gave himself up entirely to the care of his diocese of Meaux, preaching to the villagers, catechising the children, gathering families around him, and finding more satisfaction in their unsophisticated affections than he had experienced in the splendour of a court. He loved his study; but at all hours its doors

were open to those who came for consolation and instruction. Let those who are better instructed imitate his zeal while lamenting his errors.

WORKING MEN AND FLOWERS.

ONE of the pleasantest of the minor social changes which have crept upon us by degrees within the memory of the present generation, and of which we see increasing evidences with every returning summer, is that predilection for flowers and flowering plants which is fast becoming one of the characteristics of the popular mind. We value it none the less that it is altogether of modern growth; that we have watched its development for the last thirty or forty years, and have seen the household gardens of the middle and humbler classes growing gradually gorgeous and splendid with a show of floral beauty which no one dreamed of in times which we can call to mind.

The popular passion for flowers has of late years been greatly fostered by flower-shows, which are now almost general throughout the country. These shows are, nearly without exception, open to all the world; so that any man, whatever his condition in life, may become a competitor if he choose. Hence one is sometimes startled as well as pleased by learning who it is that gets the prizes, and by finding that working men, labourers, and needy cottagers have carried off the honours which their wealthier neighbours had aspired to. For dame Nature has not the slightest preference for wealth, and will deal as liberally in the working man's patch as in my lord's ten-acre garden. Then there is never any question about fair play: the jury who give their award listen to no fine speeches of counsel, and examine no witnesses; the flowers are their own advocates and witnesses, and speak for themselves without any qualifying voice; and the adjudication goes by merit, and merit only. This is the very thing that the working man likes—just a clear stage and no favour; and we need not wonder that he is so often found trying his strength upon it. And he has to put forth all his strength to win, because he has difficulties to contend with of a kind which his more fortunate rivals know nothing of, and which he can only conquer by constant care.

It is not often that working men compete with the growers of exotics, and of such flowers as require an artificial climate to rear them; though instances are not wanting where they have been successful even here. As a rule they have no hot-houses; and though they can and will get up glass-houses now and then, even in the close, dusty back-yards of a London suburb, and turn them to good account, they find it more to their interest to confine their attention to such hardy and more manageable plants as will bear the vicissitudes of our climate. There is now, fortunately, a pretty wide choice for them, without meddling with hot-house nurslings, requiring too much care and expense for them to bestow. There are primulas, ranunculuses, auriculas; ten-week stocks, so glorious at Whitsuntide; the tom-thumbs, pelargoniums, superbes, sylvias, uniques, andres, heclas, and a dozen others of the geranium tribe; there are endless varieties of the fuchsia; pinks, carnations, wall-flowers, calceolarias, dahlias, and the magnificent azaleas, that workmen's wives take such a pride in: not to mention a number of other favourite flowers for which prizes are continually offered in competition. Such as these are the practicable plants with which the poor man can deal with most success; and we are probably not affirming more than the truth when we say of most

of the plants within this category, that there are working men and cottagers who know as much concerning them as any man knows, and can cultivate them as well—not that knowing all about them will do much good, without the most careful attention while a plant that is intended to contest the prize is in the course of rearing. It is interesting to note not only the knowledge which a hard-handed amateur will pick up from time to time of these fragile and delicate creations, but the cunning use he will make of it; to see how he will coddle and nurse the tender weaklings till they become strong; how he treats them like helpless infants, watching their condition and the growth of their constitution; how he knows what they will bear, and what they will not; how he will indulge or stint their thirst, *pro re nata*, as the doctors say, now refreshing them with a draught, now invigorating them with the sunshine, now cooling them with shade, and anon stimulating them with a little liquid manure—retarding their development or accelerating it according to circumstances—and making use of every resource that experience has taught him, all to bring them up to the highest pitch of perfection in just the right nick of time for exhibition.

When the nurseryman or the professional gardener competes for a prize, he can manage the matter easily, compared with the cottager or the workman. Having plenty of means and plenty of space, professional florists do not risk their chance upon a single venture, but grow a number of plants of the same kind, and select the best for show. It is generally quite otherwise with the working man, who is usually obliged to stake his prospects upon a single chance; so that if that fails he is defeated. Anxious days and nights does he sometimes pass as the show-day draws near; and many a time have we seen him dash off at full speed from his work as the dinner-hour struck, and race homewards to see how the nursing was getting on. We knew an enthusiastic Camberwell competitor some time ago, who, having raised a bouncing dark dahlia to a prodigious size, grew exceedingly nervous and apprehensive lest any harm should befall it. He invented ingenious devices, in the shape of paper traps, for vermin, and these he disposed about the stem of the plant, so as to fortify all approaches to the flower. Nevertheless, on the night before the flower-show he lay down to sleep full of fears, and when he did sleep was oppressed with a horrible dream of a big black slug rioting among the glorious petals of his darling. He leaped from his bed, lighted his lamp, and rushed down to his patch of garden. There, sure enough, he caught, not a slug, but a caitiff earwig, who had surmounted all his defences, and who, had he arrived five minutes later, would have infallibly ruined his flower. As ill-luck would have it, just as the earwig was disposed of, and Bob was coming away after a careful and prying examination of his treasure, Policeman Something suddenly turned his bull's-eye on him, and, leaping the low fence, rushed to apprehend him as a burglar. The policeman's path lay right in the direction of the flower, which in another moment he would have crushed to ruin; but Bob caught him by a timely grip on the collar, and the next moment both lay struggling on the ground. Of course the matter was soon explained, though the explanation turned the laugh against Bob, who cared little for that next day, when he bore away a handsome medal as first prizeman. Other prizes had been won by our careful friend, who had come off with honours eight or ten times. One trait of his character we take leave to mention, because it is more honourable to him than any prize of his winning. On one occasion he packed a box of prime dahlias for exhibition at a

famous county show: he knew they could not be excelled, and felt sure of a prize; and, to make assurance doubly sure, he carried the box himself to the railway-station, and saw it booked for despatch. Owing to the neglect or forgetfulness of the booking-clerk, it was not sent until after the adjudication; and though the flowers were universally acknowledged to be the best on the ground, Bob lost his prize, as they came too late. He was advised to sue the railway company for compensation; but "No," said he; "it will bring the clerk into trouble: I shall say nothing about it."

Without declaring ourselves of the opinion of those who seem to think that the love of nature and the beautiful in nature is incompatible with anything vicious or immoral in the character, we may be allowed to state our conviction that the pursuit of flower-culture, albeit under difficulties, is calculated "to soften men's manners, and prevent them from becoming brutal," quite as effectually, at least, as a course of gerund-grinding, which latter is a corrective that the working man doesn't get. So far as our observation goes, we feel justified in affirming that this gentle and delicate pursuit, even when it does not lead to the competing for and winning of prizes, often leads men away from the skittle-ground, the tap-room, and the gin-shop, and gives them a distaste for lower and mere animal gratifications. We have known many men whose little patches of garden ground have proved their greatest benefactors—who, through the study of and familiarity with flowers at home, have had their eyes opened to the boundless beauties and treasures of nature, and have thus been raised intellectually far above their fellows. Such men, it may be said with truth, are invariably the best of their class, and it is rare indeed that anything unmanly or ungenerous can be laid to their charge. Wandering the other day over a field, and down in the neighbourhood of a great city, we came upon a self-taught botanist, as he was sorting his day's gatherings of plants, while resting after his meal of bread-and-cheese by the side of a little spring, whose waters assuaged his thirst. He was a working man enjoying his holiday in his own way; that is, while his shopmates were carousing at a rural tavern, he was botanizing over the fields. This worthy fellow's knowledge made us ashamed of our own ignorance. He knew every plant to be found within a circuit of twenty miles in diameter, and could describe and classify them all, from the lichen that covered the rock at his feet, to the majestic oak that towered above his head; there was not a blade of grass or a tendril of moss to be found which was a stranger to him; while he seemed to know the virtues and properties of all that grew from the soil. Contrast such a man, taking home his day's gatherings, and his fresh spoil of knowledge, after a day of calm and reasonable enjoyment amidst the wonders of creation, with Tippler Tom, dragged home by his comrades in a half-senseless state after a day of drinking.

We have been led to this brief talk about flowers by happening to fall in with a newspaper report of a flower-show held in the beginning of July last, in the Ragged School, Finsbury Market, Tottenham Court Road. Many of the exhibitors competing for the prizes were very young children, some of whom had raised their delicate flowers in the courts and lanes and little back-yard patches of ground shadowed by London smoke. There was a good display of geraniums, fuchsias, and other flowers in pots; and, for the best of these, prizes (small sums of money) were decreed by an experienced florist, and distributed by a noble lord whose name and co-operation are always found in connection with everything tending to the elevation of the labouring classes.

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